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Thesis

THE FOLLOWING OF JESUS

Submitted by

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THE FOLLOWING OF JESUS.

"And they straightway left the nets, and followed Him."
Matthew 4:20.

INTRODUCTION.

1. The Subject.

"The following of Jesus" is the subject for this thesis. The expression itself refers only to the experience of those men whose lives are portrayed in the literary records of the New Testament. What is involved in Jesus' demands that men organize their lives around the ideal of absolute loyalty to the Father as revealed in His life, teaching, and redemptive ministry? What religious, moral, social, political, and economic requirements did Jesus set up as the ideals, standards, and beliefs which those who would follow Him would need to make as a part of their experience? In other words, what was the religious experience of the early disciples of Jesus as defined by the expression "Following Jesus?" Is it possible to think of the religious experience of these first followers of Jesus apart from His contact with them in terms both of active life and in teaching?

2. Scope.

It is at once evident that the teachings of Jesus will be used only in so far as they throw light upon the experience of these men. But it is impossible to analyze and interpret the experience of these men unless one takes into consideration the content of Jesus' teachings as well as the influence of His character and life upon them. Naturally the teachings of Jesus do define the demands of Jesus. But the teachings of Jesus, likewise, portray and depict the beliefs which Jesus expected of His followers. It will be, therefore, impossible to approach the subject without taking into consideration the teachings of Jesus as a point of departure, together with Jesus' own outstanding religious experience. The scope of this investigation, I shall need to limit, therefore, to the experience of the early disciples of Jesus, that is those men who consorted with him in the days of his flesh.

a. Limitation.

> I want to analyze and interpret the religious experience of the disciples as presented in their response to Jesus' call, "Follow Thou Me." The teachings of Jesus I shall use therefore as they bear directly upon the experience of the early followers of Jesus.

b. Content.

The content of this study will need first of all to describe briefly the outstanding religious experiences of Jesus relative to the light they throw upon the demands Jesus made upon His followers, and the religious instruction to which he submitted them, that is to say, the synoptic record will furnish, first of all, data for the investigation. Those chapters in Acts which picture the life and preaching of the Eleven are to be added to the synoptic portrayal; but the life and writing of Paul, though he did not sit at the feet of Jesus, must be taken into consideration, for his Damascus experience, and his connection with the first followers of Jesus, and undoubtedly with the Jesus-tradition, make him a part of the early Christian community, though in an indirect manner he may be thought of as embodying in the first generation the words, "Follow Me."

It is a problem as to whether or not the Johannine literature, the General Epistles, the Apocalypse, are to be included in this discussion. I have decided, however, to omit them because of the fact that they, seemingly, have a certain separation from the early followers, and in part at least, embody a later interpretation of the

meaning of Jesus. The fourth gospel does not add any new light to the synoptic data as far as my problem is concerned. The General Epistles do not bear upon the problem in spite of the fact that First Peter may have come from the hand of Peter, and Hebrews presents somewhat formally the superiority of Jesus. The Apocalypse, though it breathes a spirit of loyalty to Jesus in face of persecution, bears upon the problem only in so far as it illustrates, as do the other literary pieces to which I have referred in this paragraph, the place that Jesus had come to have, in the experience of His followers, approximately two generations or more after His crucifixion. I shall, therefore, not include these writings in my discussion.

I. The Experience of Jesus As An Approach to the Problem, "Following Jesus."

1. The Bsptism of Jesus.

Jesus entered into the midst of a period of National life when there was much excitement which was religious as well as political. While the political revolutionary movement of Judas and Saddouck was gaining momentum in the North country, a great religious movement was under way in Judea, the leader of which was John the Baptist. In this period, everyone expected the coming of some kind of a Messiah. Just what he would be, depended upon, more or less, in which group you belonged. Each party of Judaism had its own conception of the kingdom and the Messiah. The Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Zealots, and the Scribes did not agree upon any one idea. These groups were intensely interested when John came, preaching the coming of the kingdom. The great wave of religious excitement, produced by the preaching of John, had set the whole community in motion. Whitfield, in the last century, who stirred the whole nation in his day, helps us to realize the sensation produced by John's ministrations. To a people involved for the time in religious apathy, and corrupted in morals, but loyal to the voice of their Scriptures,

and the lofty, spiritual ideals of the past, his voice came like a trumpet, rousing them to a new life.

John told of the coming of a person who would be greater than he. Perhaps this one would be the One whom God would elect as his Messiah. This individual would send the spirit of God surging through the hearts of men. In a study of John's preaching, it is clear that John was not a mere reformer in the Jewish church, for "his message was that a new Israel was to be established and that, without a complete change of spirit, the most privileged members of the old church would have no place in the new."[1] All previous valuations were no good, and the priests must change their way of living as Amos and Hosea had called them to do in their days. John took no cognizance of the Law, or anything that could be said to have any connection with the temple or the church. To such a character, Jesus came and sought baptism. "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan." (Mark 1:9.).

We may assume that He certainly understood the act in the sense in which John intended it. Holtzmann

1. Findlay, "Jesus in the First Gospel." p. 27.

says, "Jesus was impelled to baptism by a resolve to live henceforth according to the will of God, and by the hope of thereby winning a place in the Kingdom of God."[1] Jesus' baptism meant that He was accepting the Kingdom and subscribing to it.

The account of the baptism of Jesus is given in all three of the Synoptic records. The account in Matthew runs as follows:

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John would have hindered Him, saying 'I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?' But Jesus, answering, said unto him, 'Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he suffereth him. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went straightway from the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'" (Matthew 3:13-17.).

1. Holtzmann, Life of Jesus." p. 133.

The Marcan account runs:

"And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent assunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon Him: and a voice came out of the heavens, 'Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased.'" (Mark 1:9-11.).

The Lucan account runs:

"Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that, Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon Him, and a voice came out of heaven, 'Thou art my beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased'" (Luke 3:21-22.).

All three accounts agree upon the fact that John was baptizing in the Jordan. Matthew and Mark mention it in these citations, but Luke mentions it in (Luke 3:3.). All agree that Jesus was baptized, but there is some disagreement as to how Jesus was there. Mark and Matthew agree that Jesus came down from Galilee, Mark being the only one that names Nazareth. Luke does not mention the fact of Jesus' journey, but has Him present there. Matthew alone gives the dialogue between Jesus and John which Matthew may have placed there in order to meet

a certain problem that the Jewish Christian Community had to face. Both Matthew and Mark agree that Jesus came up out of the water, and had the experience then. Luke intimates that the experience may have happened while Jesus was still in the water, just after undergoing baptism, and that it grew out of an attitude of prayer which the other two gospel records leave out. All three agree to the fact that the heavens were opened or rent assunder. They also agree that the spirit came in the form of a dove, and descended or came upon Him. That a voice came out of the heavens appears in all three. In all three accounts the voice says practically the same thing. Yes, in Matthew, the voice speaks to John and the crowd in such a way as to accentuate John's theory of Jesus' preeminence in the dialogue. Matthew uses the Divine Voice to accentuate John's acknowledgment. In this way, the early Jewish Christian Community could say that God not only told John, but that also the crowd around could hear it. In this way they could meet the early criticism of the Jews of Jesus' inferiority to John. It seems as if Matthew, realizing the conditions of the story, took advantage of them and used them to prove a certain point that was under debate at that time in Palestine. It seems

as though Mark and Luke were not bothered with this point. Undoubtedly the truth of the whole incident is found more in Luke and Mark, than in Matthew, from the historical point of view. It seems that Matthew had a certain theory to defend and prove, and he took advantage of John and of the Divine Voice to prove his position.

When it comes to the Psychological implications of the baptism, the account of Jesus' baptism does not rest on the report of any witness, nor can it be regarded as historical in the modern sense of the word. The experience as related must come from one man, and it undertakes to tell of the experience of Jesus during, or at the time of the baptism. In so doing, the poetic language to describe such an experience was necessary. Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:4-10.) and Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-13.) related their experiences. Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1.) had a similar experience. This great experience of Jesus depicts the great spiritual impulse by which Jesus was anointed of the Spirit. The whole experience is similar to that of the prophets. In His experience, Jesus experienced what the early Christian did, but perhaps more so. "For baptism is a rite of adoption by the Spirit of God, which, as Paul says, 'testifies with one spirit that we are born of God.' Knowing the source and

nature of Jesus' devotion, knowing in what spirit he came from the baptism of John, primitive Christians rightly conceived of Jesus' baptism as involving all that was involved in their own experience."[1]

Jesus came to the Jordan a mature man who had reflected for years on the great theses of religion, and who had developed an experience which was capable of sustaining the great responsibility that was later laid upon Him. He also found Himself in harmony with the ideas of John and wished to be identified with the movement. This is evident from the fact of his great eulogy of John. When he was in the water, his soul was profoundly stirred, and as he came out of the water praying, the vision broke forth in soul. Bosworth says, "The dove and the voice are not to be thought of as something that could be photographed and dictographed, but as features of a profound, spiritual experience producing a physical effect determined by current habits of thought and local conditions."[2] The inner experience produced the visions and the vision did not produce the experience. The sudden and strong up-welling of the life of God in the depths of His soul could have seemed nothing less than the spirit of God coming from heaven.

1. Bacon, "The Story of Jesus." p. 140.
2. Bosworth, "The Life and Teachings of Jesus." p. 68.

"The essence of being not simply a son of the Heavenly Father, to which He had been long accustomed, but of being 'The Son, the Beloved' could be nothing less than the spirit of God coming from heaven. The essence of being not simply a son of the Heavenly Father, to which he had been long accustomed, but of being 'The Son, the Beloved' could be nothing less than the voice of God calling him to assume some form of leadership in the new age the expectation of which was thrilling the hearts of thousands."[1]

The experience of Jesus was entirely a psychological phenomenon, and can be best understood in that relationship. If we try to take it as a piece of literalism it looses its finest meaning. The whole experience was one in which His whole soul opened up in an entirely new way. Undoubtedly He had been religious all His life and came from an average and respectable Jewish home, but this experience was most extraordinary, something exceptional in the life of a young man who was radiant with the powers and enthusiasm of youth. We do not get the best meaning of the experience when we say that John or the crowd heard the voice as Matthew intimates. It seems a rather erroneous idea to think that they experienced this voice, because they were not going through the baptismal experience. It was Jesus that was having the experience. John was baptizing and

1. Bosworth, "The Life and Teachings of Jesus." p. 68.

and the crowd was watching. Jesus told the experience later to His followers, and placed upon it the emphasis of most extreme value, an experience that changed His life. Some have said that this experience has all the earmarks of paranoia and that Jesus was a paranoiac, suffering from hallucinations and delusions. Perhaps Jesus did see things for the moment which he would not have commonly seen in His ordinary and conscious experience. Although Jesus did have this strange and uncommon experience, He did not suffer the effects of paranoia in his later life. A paranoiac is one who suffers impairment of intellect with a general deterioration of personality, a victim of systematic and periodic delusions of an auditory and optic sort. There is a tendency to homicida conditions, developing into unpleasant complexes. Jesus may have heard and seen things at the Jordan. The psychologist may prove for his own satisfaction the implications of such an experience, but regardless, the experience did mean much to Jesus and the years of His life that followed proved beyond any possible doubt that his power had not deteriorated, and that this intellect and will developed into majestic power. There was a change in the life of Jesus in which His will sought a harmonious relation with the Divine Will in so far as His life work was concerned. Jesus took His life and decided what He would do with it.

Whether Jesus realized His Messianic consciousness here is not at all certain, for we have no direct mention of it until the Caesarea Philippi incident. This experience meant for Jesus that he was not a sinner coming for repentance. He had no necessity to be drastically changed, no reason to repent as a hardened sinner. He simply allied His life to the Kingdom as John presented it. He gave His life to God for disposal as far as the Kingdom was concerned. The Baptism marked the culmination of a life that was submitted to God. The Baptism included the idea of repentance if it was necessary, but its essential feature was the making of a right adjustment toward the Kingdom. Holtzmann says, "Jesus was also impelled to baptism by a resolve to live henceforth according to the will of God, and by the hope of thereby winning a place in the kingdom of God."[1] Jesus realized in the experience what his part would be in ushering in the Kingdom of God.

1. Holtzmann, "Life of Jesus." p. 133.

2. The Temptation of Jesus.

The mind needs to collect itself to survey the ground, and gird itself up to its task, planning its efforts, and guarding against failure, before entering on any great enterprise. It is in retirement, and sacred communion with God and one's own soul, that we refresh ourselves for our greatest tasks. It was in the solitudes of the mountains that Moses prepared himself for the work of creating a people for God. The Baptist came from the wilderness to enter upon his work as a Reformer. The wilderness, with its quiet and seclusion, was alone fitted for the retirement of Jesus. To be alone was to have every thought arise in turn, to have human weakness plead for indulgence, and human fears counsel safety. We can not conceive of Jesus escaping suggestions.

Of the temptation experience John makes no mention in his gospel. Mark makes a very brief statement. Matthew and Luke have given us full accounts of the experience. Matthew places the temptations at the end of forty days, while Luke makes the entire period of forty days as one of temptations. Mark agrees with Luke in this particular.

The order of the temptations according to Luke are:

1. To change stones into bread.

2. To worship the devil.

3. To jump from the temple.

The order of the temptations according to Matthew are:

1. To change stones to bread.

2. To jump from the temple.

3. To worship the devil.

Luke has Jesus lead from place to place during the forty days.

Many causes combine to produce the story of the temptations. There was the belief that many of the great heroes (Abraham, Moses, Job), had been tempted and conquered. Jesus, who was greater than any of these, must have been a great conqueror. Consequently it was only natural that he should be tempted too. There was the belief that one of the functions of the Messiah was to conquer Satan, the chief devil, and to overcome the demons. There were parallels in other religions, and it is not impossible that the temptation stories of Buddha influenced the gospel narratives. Zoroaster, Confucius, and Paul had such experiences with temptation, such stories were not uncommon.[1] The story

1. C. F. Kent - "Life and Teachings of Jesus." p. 66.

puts at the beginning of Jesus' life, in one concentrated and highly imaginative form, certain real temptations with which He possibly had to grapple in the course of His actual life.[1]

The temptations were twofold. There was the temptation to ask God for signs and miracles, and the temptation to aid or aim at worldly power. We know that the crowd often asked Jesus for some sign. Instead of teaching, the crowd wanted miracles. It is very true that Jesus worked wonders, yet they were incidental to His teachings. He gave no formal sign as was given to Elijah in the presence of the prophets of Baal. We actually discount many of the miracles accredited to Jesus during His ministry. Montefiore thinks that nothing short of big miracles were performed by Jesus to put forth teaching counter to the Law. Doubtless, Jesus according to the views of His own age did believe He could work miracles. He may have also believed that to request God to aid Him in such performances was tempting God (Matthew 4:7; Deuteronomy 4:10.). He may have believed that His cause was to advance by its own inherent truth and not by force.[2]

The situation which lay before Jesus we can best understand by comparing the popular hope of what the Messiah should be with Jesus himself. What was Jesus,

1. Montefiore - The Synoptic Gospels - II Vol. p. 19.
2. Montefiore - The Synoptic Gospels - II Vol. p. 20.

as Messiah, to do with the expectations of the people? They believed that the Kingdom of God was to be the Kingdom of Israel. Israel was to have a final conflict in which all her enemies would be subdued. Then the new age of prosperity and happiness would arrive. Jerusalem would be the capital of the earth with all nations subject unto her.[1]

The probable source of the temptation story was Jesus Himself. It would only be natural that He should reveal some of His inner struggles to those who lived closest to Him, to His ministry. We can believe that at some time or other He told His disciples concerning his plans for the Kingdom, and how He had been struggling to realize them. He also must have told them His views concerning the Messiah, with a possible plan as to His mission for the world.

Jesus was tempted to choose lower values than He held for the Kingdom's building. His greatest interest was His Father's will in the Kingdom building program, and the narrative is a poetical expression of an inward, spiritual struggle. There were courses of action presented that Jesus recognized to be Satanic in character. The great temptation which lay before Him was to ask Himself the question, "How will the inner life of the man Jesus respond to the revelation of God,

1. Rall, "Life of Jesus." Chap. 6.

which promises Him the office of judge of all men, the sovereignty of the world as finally perfected?"[1]

1. Holtzmann, "Life of Jesus." p. 148.

THE FIRST TEMPTATION.

"And when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.'

But he answered and said, 'It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'" (Matthew 4:3,4.).

Here Jesus is tempted to prove His Messiahship by working a miracle to supply His hunger. The tempter uses Jesus' physical needs as a ground for the miracle. The temptation arose out of the contrast of assurance of Messiahship at the Jordan river and the utter need at the present time. "If Thou art the Son of God," implies the meaning, "Are you sure of that assurance?" If He be the helper of the whole world, could He not help Himself?

What is the temptation in changing a stone or two into as many loaves of bread? Wouldn't it be great to have a God to do such things at our bidding? What would ever become of this world if we were to have a God who listened to every beckoning of the souls in this world? After people have their stomachs filled, what have they? All we can answer is that they have full stomachs. Jesus could certainly not get

very much accomplished by resorting to such things as the temptation implies. Jesus is trying to decide what method to use in carrying out His Messianic career. Evidently he felt he could not help people to become self-controlled, kindly, tolerant, and considerate if He were to pursue a miraculous Kingdom building program. What connection is there between a full dinner-pail and a good character? Jesus concluded that bread is not the whole of life. Man is not to be the victim of his appetites - he needs God. The temptation was the opportunity to do the notorious, and the miraculous in His ministry. Jesus possessed an insight into the demands of a Messiah, and realized the result which would come about if He should submit to any false conception of His Messiahship. His purpose was to portray God to man; He could not do that best by yielding to the miraculous changing of stone to bread. He rejected the idea of being a 'bread-Messiah.' We remember how he fed the crowd, and immediately they returned for more food. Jesus realized that if he were going to show people God, it would involve far more than feeding them physically, for it was spiritual food that they needed most. There is much more in life than the physical. To be sure the physical is necessary, but the spiritual is just

as important, and should be developed to the highest extent. Jesus concluded that the thing men needed was God. He answered the question in the light of His knowledge of the character of God. If He is to be the Messiah, He must be the kind who can best reveal the character and will of God.

THE SECOND TEMPTATION.

"Then the Devil taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple,

And saith unto Him, 'If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee: and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.'

Jesus said unto him, 'It is written again, THOU SHALT NOT TEMPT THE LORD THY GOD'" (Matthew 4:5-7.).

As soon as Jesus was convinced that He was the Messiah, He was confronted with the question of how He would prove His Messiahship to others. How was He going to get others to accept his great message? Would people believe Him? What credentials would He take with Him? True, he desired to make no attempt to establish the Kingdom of God without an explicit commission from God Himself. As already the Baptist had seen in the certainty of the nearness of the

Kingdom of God, a reason for preaching repentance, every man who had been brought up and trained in Jewish ideas, arrived at the conviction that the judgment of God and the establishment of the Kingdom of the Messiah to be immediately impending. No one would believe that the Messiah could be in Jesus of Nazareth. Then there comes to Jesus the tempting idea of revealing Himself to His people as the Messiah, by some great and wonderful deed which shall be manifest to all. He was in the wilderness, the rallying-point of all Jewish life was the holy temple in Jerusalem. Here He could demonstrate His Messiahship by jumping from the top of the temple. Matthew 4,5 seems to denote a side building. A psalm familiar to Him contained a promise to one who put his trust in God.

"He will give his angels charge over thee,
To keep Thee in all thy ways.
They shall bear thee up in their hands,
Lest thou hurt thyself upon a stone."
(Ps. 91:11,12.).

If He were God's Son He would be protected from all danger. What better way could be conceived of asserting His Messianic claim? No one who could see Him do this could doubt His message. The safety in His jump would supply the necessary credentials, and the people would be

eager to hear His message.

Jesus recalled Deut. 6:16., "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God," "Tempt" meaning "to make trial of" or "put to the test." "He perceived that He had no right to expect the protection in any course but the highest, in any course which His own consciousness told Him was a short cut to His end. To abandon the religion of man's needs and work wonders, not for their relief and as the revelation of God's love, but for mere display, was, he felt, to trespass the Father's intentions."[1]

Jesus was creating an artificial situation so as to put God's word to Him to test, to compel God to give Him outward proof of His aid. Jesus knew God as a Father, and the question came to Him why He was testing Him. He trusted His father and knowing the assigned task, was willing to go out and do His will. Thus with God, Jesus fought with His doubt and conquered. His heart was set toward eternal things. Accordingly He repels the tempter with the words, It is written (Deut. 6:13.). "Thou shalt worship the Lord Thy God, and Him only shalt Thou serve" (Matt. 4:10 ; Luke 4:8.).

What could Jesus accomplish by the process of temple jumping? It would simply show Him to be a miracle-working Messiah. But how long would the

1. Hastings, Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels. Vol. II, p. 764.

attraction have lasted? Human flies never stay very long at one place, or else they change their repertoire. Thus they are subject to the crowd. If a man jumps from a church steeple safely he proves simply that he can jump from a church steeple. This does not prove anything about His character, His personality or Messiahship. The temple jumper would thrill the crowd, but they'd go away saying that he was a great jumper, not "I believe He could help me triumph over sin and live a better life." On a number of other occasions they said, "Give us a sign (Matt. 12:16.)." Pilate said in essence, "I've heard about your signs, give us a jump." The same thing happened when Jesus was on the cross.

Just how does the performance of miracles prove character? The test of the Son of God is not power, but how he uses that power. As Jesus looked at this, He came to see that such a display would not be a revelation of God, but a testing or tempting of God. The Millenialists today want temple jumping as revealed in their conception of the coming of Christ. All through His life people tried to make Him a healing, miraculous Messiah, but always he subordinated this element. He could have healed men and left them just

as sinful and impure as they were before. The uniqueness of Jesus does not consist in temple jumping or wonder working, but in His character and personality. He decided to let God manifest Himself through His character day by day, hour by hour, rather than in miracles. "So Jesus, in rejecting this suggestion of the tempter, laid down for Himself the principle that, though conscious of Messiahship, He was still to use the reason which God had given Him, and not to expect that divine power would be manifested in His case, except as He gave heed to divine laws."[1]

THE THIRD TEMPTATION.

"Again the Devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

And saith unto Him, 'All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.'

Then Jesus saith unto him, 'Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, THOU SHALT WORSHIP THE LORD THY GOD, AND HIM ONLY SHALT THOU SERVE.'

Then the Devil leaveth Him and behold, angels came and ministered unto Him (Matthew 4:8-11.)."

1. Gilbert, Life of Jesus (Students life) page 60.

"There is no mountain in, nor around that region from which one can view the whole of Palestine, let alone the whole world. It is true that one can see for a distance of fifty or sixty miles from the highest summits in Palestine. The location of the temptation was in the mind of Jesus. The changes of scenes are entirely mental."[1]

The ordinary expectation of the Messiah was that He would be a great King and conqueror, one who would establish a Jewish empire and make Jerusalem instead of Rome, a mistress of the world. Thousands would follow a leader in revolt against Rome in order to set up a monarchy described by the Prophets. Empires were founded by force and Jesus could not subscribe to this (Deut. 6:13.). "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Jesus decided this. He would establish a Kingdom in which God was supreme. A Kingdom based upon love and not force. Thus He put away the idea of becoming a military leader and establishing a monarchy like that of Rome or Parthia. He would present in all its matchless beauty the will of God to men's minds; he would disclose God's love to their hungry hearts until, attracted away from sin and drawn out of selfishness, men would voluntarily yield themselves to the will of God, and the Kingdom of

1. Plummer, The Gospel According to Matthew. p. 37.

God would be established.

Again the third temptation is not a literal experience, but a pictorial telling of Jesus' experience. Jesus wanted to win the world. The question was, "How shall I win it?" "What method shall I use?" As the Messiah it was His concrete task to win the world for God. Luke reveals the current cosmology of the age which regarded the world as belonging to the devil.

What kind of an experience could have come to Jesus which would have led Him to interpret it as worshipping the devil? Here we have a fine illustration of the fact that here was a man who had been brooding and reflecting for months and years, and whose reflection had given him an ideal so high that to depart from it would be equivalent to worshipping the devil. In thinking over this ideal, He was confronted with the ideal that it was too high - unattainable, that perhaps it would be best to lower it somewhat. He might have thought, "human nature being what it is" you can't expect people to love their neighbors as themselves. Such thinking would have been similar to the devils saying, "you are too impractical, too idealistic." Make your character door a little wider, build your fence a little lower. Jesus realized that His ideal of the Kingdom was different from that of the

Ecclesiastics, the Zealots, the Pharisees, and Sadducees. He had to answer all of these things during His ministry, and He met them in accordance with the principles arrived at during the first six weeks. His conclusion here was, "I can't qualify my ideal; I can't say that partial love is enough." The temptation included, of course, the knowledge that perhaps He would have greater immediate success if He lowered His standards.

Jesus decides what kind of a Messiah He was to be. He will be God's Messiah, whose character will equate with the character of God. His Kingdom will be God's Kingdom. He had a deep conviction that He knew God, and could do no other than conform His program to what He knew of God's character. This would admit no compromise, no turning of stones into bread, no temple-jumping, no partnership with forces of evil as a temporary, practical expedient. These principles form the major trunk lines of His life and ministry.

Jesus wanted His friends to know that questions like these came to Him. In all the temptations Jesus had waited for illumination. Jesus thought He knew God. This dominated Him, and He proceeded on this measure. This is the greatest secret of His life, and the greatest gift to humanity.

Jesus will gain His followers not by doing wonders, but by quiet work of teaching that shall win men's hearts and minds. The temptation story gives us the spiritual insight of Jesus, the moral victory of Jesus, the human life of Jesus. He was tempted in all respects as we are. Jesus gave us a life as an example, a character worthy of heeding his great command, "Follow Me."

3. THE PASSION EXPERIENCE.

The other outstanding aspect of Jesus' experiences aside from the baptism and temptation experiences was the passion experience, not only of the last week, but at the period when He first came into a consciousness that the demands of the Messiah might include a suffering Messiah. The beheading of John the Herald together with the falling away of popularity may be thought of as the immediate cause. The opposition on the part of the Scribes and Pharisees had become somewhat marked. Jesus had, therefore, to face the question, "Would He like John the Baptist be put to death if he continued to refuse to compromise his teachings?" Hence we find Jesus going away into the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi in order to be along with His problem and His disciples. At this time came also the transfiguration experience in which Jesus, in the light of the law and the prophets, came definitely to the conclusion that it might be necessary for the Son of man to suffer at the hands of man because of the religious opposition. The Synoptics and the gospels portray Jesus at this time reminding His disciples again and again that it might be necessary for the Son of man to forfeit His life for His teachings and ministry. The prayers of Jesus in Gethsemane indicate his consciousness that the religious bodies of the Jews planned to crucify Him,

His own absolute obedience to the Father's will. This so-called passion experience of Jesus certainly helps portray the requirements he placed upon His disciples.

4. DO THESE EXPERIENCES OF JESUS THROW ANY LIGHT UPON THE DEMANDS THAT JESUS MADE OF HIS FOLLOWERS?

The baptismal experience of Jesus might be thought of as indicating the condition of entrance into the Kingdom. The temptations may be thought of as defining the kind of life or the conditions of membership in the Kingdom. The "Passion experience" of Jesus may be thought of as describing the absolute obedience which the demands of loyalty to God, the Father, involve. But in addition to the light which these experiences of Jesus throw upon His demands on His followers there are other matters to be taken into consideration. The following of Jesus means more than following Jesus. The command "Follow me" is not a sufficient definition of the requirements Jesus placed upon His followers. They were to believe certain things about Him, about His kind of God, about His kind of world, about His kind of attitude toward mankind, about His self-attitude, about His kind of Kingdom.

Over against this point of view Bundy has written "Jesus had no creed, no formal statement of His faith, no confession that He required of His disciples. The one

great command of Jesus was, 'Follow me.' It is the only command he ever gave a disciple in the way of religious requirements. He did not require that His disciples believe certain things about Him, but that they believe with Him, that they share His faith in God and His kingdom, a much more difficult task. It is not difficult to believe in Jesus, but to believe with Him, to believe what and as He believed, and to work for its realization as He did, is a religious task that lays hold on the deepest sources of human life."[1]

It is my opinion that Bundy has taken a one-sided view relative to the problem. It shall, therefore, be my purpose in the following pages, to indicate that the demand, "Follow me," as Jesus made it on His disciples is not self-explanatory, but involves a matter of beliefs, ideals, values, standards.

1. Bundy, "Our Recovery of Jesus," p. 10.

II. THE FOLLOWING OF JESUS IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH.

The seclusion in the wilderness had been the turning point in the life and career of Jesus. He had left Nazareth to visit the revival at the Jordan; He returned, the consecrated Messiah, no longer oppressed by the responsibilities and difficulties of His great office, but ready to proclaim His great Kingdom message.

1. Calling of the twelve.

Jesus, now about to begin His public ministry, was ready to receive disciples. It was the custom for the teachers of the day to have around them an inner circle of disciples, able, in some measure, to represent them in public, in their own absence, by speaking in the synagogues, answering questions, or undertaking missionary journeys, and these were to be the special duties of the disciples of Jesus. They were to be trained by Him in the mysteries of the Kingdom, as those of the Rabbis were in the mysteries of the law. No teacher assumed his office in Israel without a group of such followers around him, for it was a grave sin for a Rabbi to be at any time without some one to instruct in the law,[1] and even their scholars were required to converse habitually on this one study of their lives. "When two

1. Keim 2, Jesu von Nazara, 3 Vol. p. 204.

scholars of the wise," says the Talmud,[1] "are making a journey together, and do not make the Law the subject of their conversation, they deserve to be burned alive, as is written in 2 Kings 2:2." It was, therefore, only an adoption of the day which Jesus now followed.

Capernaum, a large town on the lakeside, affording more opportunities for meeting people than an out-of-the-way village like Nazareth, was selected by Jesus as a good location in which to begin His ministry. Jesus went to Capernaum with no letters of introduction and little reputation, with no college diploma or synagogue parchment. He did not go as a public teacher. He probably stayed at the house of friends. Capernaum was only about fifteen miles from Nazareth. He met a lot of folks at the Jordan revival, and may have taken work at Capernaum, a contract of some kind. Possibly He went to the house of Peter, and spent a few days with some of His friends. Notice what is involved:-

Jesus did not stumble upon these men. He knew them, so He went to see them in their home, office, even if that office happened to be a boat. It was not a hit and miss proposition. We can see these men at their place of business. "Come ye after me, and I'll make you fishers of men," was the outcome of the conversation, not its beginning. Jesus talked about the Kingdom of God, and the

1. Nork's Etymologisch Real - Wörterbuch, 4 Vol. p. 167.

propositions He laid before them grew out of the idea of the Kingdom. To fish means to catch. He asked them to go with Him to catch men for the Kingdom of God.

He then went to another firm, the Zebedee firm. The Senior member of the firm stayed at home to keep on fishing in order to finance the proposition. This is a guess, but it is better than saying "He missed his opportunity."

Jesus calling upon men to join him is, perhaps, more astounding than any of the miracles He wrought. First words are generally keywords. "Follow" was among his earliest public words. On leaving the wilderness He calls upon men to follow Him. In all revolutionary movements there have been men who have heard nothing but "Follow," and have gone bravely forward. The 'following' meant something more than anything they had done as yet; they were to be with Him (Mark 1:16-20) so they might receive His teaching continuously, and in a manner, systematically.

Throughout His ministry Jesus' self-consciousness was a conspicuous feature: "Follow me," - "Come unto me," - "He that believeth on me," this is the personal strain from beginning to end. Jesus commanded that men follow Him. The question now arises, "What is involved in following Him?" As far as the words, "Follow me" are concerned, together with their context, there is no indication in

them as to what Jesus meant, except that they should "Follow Him." The verb ἀκολουθέω("to follow") does not define the religious and moral demands of Jesus in detail. Nor do the words δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου("Come unto me" Mark 1:16.), δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου (Matthew 4:19) throw any light upon the problem. It is therefore necessary to examine the Synoptics in order to gain a definition of the term "Follow me."

2. Jesus' Demands of the Twelve.

The demands that Jesus placed upon the twelve as the way to follow Him might be summarized as follows: What did He expect His disciples to believe concerning Himself? In what kind of God did He demand His disciples to believe? What were the Kingdom requirements that He placed upon His followers? What attitude were they to assume toward themselves, men and toward things?

First of all, what did Jesus teach His disciples concerning Himself? Jesus, in His baptismal experience had come to a consciousness of His Messianic mission. We may expect that conclusion to color the teachings, which He gave to His followers concerning Himself. We learn from Mark 1:22, 27 that He taught them as one having authority, as over against the method of the Scribes. One may assume on the basis of these references

that Jesus expected His followers to recognize His religious authority. Whoever would fulfill the will of God would thereby become his "brethren" (Mark 3:31 ff. cf. Luke 4:36.). When Jesus preached in His native town of Nazareth "he marvelled because of their unbelief? (Mark 6:6.). Evidently He expected His hearers to accept Him as the Messiah of God. His disciples were to believe Him to be the Messiah Mark 8:22 ff. When it seemed clear to Him that He might be forced to face death, He taught His disciples that they should believe in a suffering Messiah (Mark 9:9, cf., Matthew 16:21 ff., Luke 9:18 ff.).

Jesus may be thought of as having taught His disciples that in Him is the authority to forgive sins (Matthew 9:2, Matthew 9:27 ff; Luke 5:23 ff.). They were to accept that belief as part of their attitude toward the meaning of their redemptive ministry for their own lives. He taught His disciples to expect persecution for His sake; the following of Him would involve every extreme, but the results would justify the sacrifice (Matthew 10:22 ff; cf. 20: 22 ff; Matthew 16:24-26), "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, 'If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever shall lose his life for Me shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he gained the whole world, and forfeit his life? Or what shall a man give in exchange of his life?' (cf. Luke 10:22.)."

His teaching would mean a sword rather than peace upon earth (Matthew 10:34.). Families would be divided for His sake (Matthew 10:35); Loyalty to Him was to take precedence over father and mother (Matthew 10:36,37; cf. Luke 14:25 ff.). The spirit of self-sacrifice rather than self-interest was to be the actuating motive in the lives of His followers (Matthew 10:38,39.). But the follower who was loyal to the end was the one who would have true happiness (Matthew 11:6; cf. 13:16.).

He taught that He was much more than a prophet, as over against the popular judgment of Himself (Matthew 11: 7 ff.). He taught His disciples surely, "All things were delivered to Me by my Father. And no one understandeth the Son, except the Father. Neither understandeth anyone the Father, except the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal 'Him' (Matthew 11:27.)." In this statement we see the consciousness of a unique relationship to God, "and that relationship, as the context suggests consisted in part of fullness of revelation, 'all things were delivered,' and part of pre-existence with God."[1] It is a question whether the words as originally uttered by Jesus involved consciousness of pre-existence. He taught His disciples that He came to fulfill the law and prophets (cf. Matt. 5.). He was greater than the external institutions of the law (Matthew 12:8.). His authority was even greater than the temple regulations (Matthew 21:22 ff.).

1. Allen, The International Critical Commentary. p. 123.

He assumed He had the right to overthrow the established and accepted regulations of the temple which to Him made His father's house a den of thieves.

When Jesus preached His first sermon in Nazareth He described His ministry by a quotation from Isaiah (Luke 14:18 ff.). We may assume that Jesus taught His followers to believe that His ministry was defined by the stipulations therein contained. But His disciples were not to say, "Lord, Lord," but to believe the things He said (Luke 6:46.). Then they would establish their own lives and character upon a firm foundation (Luke 6:46 ff.). He did however demand implicit faith in His ability (Luke 7:9 ff.). Those who entered the Kingdom through Him were greater than the greatest followers of John (Luke 7:28.).

Secondly, what did He teach His disciples to believe about God? He demanded that His disciples believe that God is the Father of all kinds of men, a Father who has at heart their welfare and best interests (Luke 15.). But men are to do the will of their Father (Mark 3:35; Matthew 6:9 ff; Luke 11:2.). Only God is good (Mark 10:18.). His perfection is to be the standard which men are to seek to attain (Matthew 5:48.). The things belonging to God are to be given to God (Mark 12:17.). The will of God as embodied in spiritual living in life takes precedence over an external legalism (Matthew 15:1 ff.). It is the will of

the Father that not one of His children shall perish (Matthew 18:14.). We may assume that Jesus taught His disciples that the Father in respect to character and will is revealed through Him (Jesus)(Matthew 11:27.).

Thirdly, what clear evidence do we have in His Kingdom teachings relative to His demands which He placed upon His disciples relative to their following Him?

The three temptations of Jesus were His own experience, but he certainly narrated them to His disciples. We may assume that He used them as a basis whereupon He might teach His disciples the demands of the Kingdom as He conceived them. We may believe that on the basis of the three temptations, as a point of departure, He sought to teach His disciples that in their following of Him, they were ministers to the spiritual needs of men, not in a miraculous fashion, but with faith in God, and without a compromise of the high idealism involved. In other words in the temptations of Jesus we see portrayed the kind of Messiahship, the kind of Kingdom builder He was to fulfill. We may infer that when he said to His disciples, "Follow thou me," He taught them the demands of the Kingdom in His own experience. He demanded of His disciples that they should be sowers of good seed, seed falling upon ground which would yield many fold (Mark 4:1 ff., Matthew 13:1 ff.).

"Unto them is given the mystery of the Kingdom of God (Mark 4:11 ff.)." But that mystery certainly received for the disciples a certain clarification at the hands of Jesus. He sent forth the twelve, two by two (Mark 6:7 ff.). They went forth without material equipment for their journey. They "preached that men should repent (Mark 6:12.). "We may believe that Jesus had taught them their message. It was part of His Kingdom teaching. He taught His disciples that as members of the Kingdom they should be servants of all, as little children, and receive Him, for "Whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me, but Him that sent me (Mark 9:39 ff.)." "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein (Mk. 10:15.)." "The Kingdom of God is in its idea, its essence, the rule and the authority of God, and then the sphere in which he bears rule, either the spirit of the individual man, or the assemblage of its subjects, the society constituted by them. When Jesus speaks of its acceptance, it is the rule itself which is meant; that is to be accepted with unquestionable obedience, as the child accepts the parental rule. And on the other hand, when he speaks of entrance into it, he means the society of its subjects, the perfect state and order which results from doing the will of God."[1] Concerning this same passage, Wendt

1. Gould, The International Critical Commentary, p. 188.

says, it was "Not the reception of the Kingdom of God at a childlike age, but in a childlike character, He declares to be the indispensable condition of entering the Kingdom of God; and under this childlike blamelessness, but only the receptivity itself (which is the notion impressively emphasized by Him), on the part of those who do not regard themselves as too good or too bad for the offered gift, not merely to bring the receptivity of children for earthly goods, as, for example, for the gifts of their parents, into comparison with the receptivity which adults must manifest towards the gifts of the Kingdom of God; but He speaks of a receptivity for the Kingdom of God to be universally necessary."[1] The relationship between Jesus and His disciples was that of the closest friendship, and in view of the fact that they had been rejected by their contemporaries made the interest in a future glory all the more eagerly cherished. It was in this relationship that they became involved in the question of precedence in the future Messianic Kingdom. "In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, 'Who then is greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?' And He called to Him a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble

himself as this little child in my name receiveth me: but whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea." (Matthew 18:1-6.).

Jesus is very clear here in His demand that unless they become as the child, unassuming, untempted to self-advancement, they are far from being in the Kingdom and shall never enter it. But if they gain from the child the lesson of being humble and become again as children, i.e., unassuming, and recognize and welcome this relationship they will have a place in the Kingdom. "In other words, If ye fit yourselves for the Kingdom of God, ye must begin your life over again from the beginning; ye must break with all your acquired failings and prejudices."[1] Not one aspect of their life was to be allowed to keep them from the Kingdom; their whole life was to be organized around their Kingdom loyalty (Mark 9:43 ff.).

The beatitudes (Matthew 5:3 ff., cf., Luke 6:20 ff.) are Jesus' descriptions of the ideal Kingdom member. The follower of Jesus is to make real in His experience the ideals involved in these beatitudes. We may believe that Jesus required this as the prerequisite for following Him in His Kingdom program.

When Jesus sent His disciples out to preach He sent

1. Holtzmann, "The Life of Jesus," p. 355.

them as a measure of practical expediency to the Jews only (Matthew 10:5 ff.). He taught them to preach, "That the Kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 10:7.). He outlined for them a program of action relative to their preaching ministry (Matthew 10:8 ff.). He describes for them the character of the future possible members of the Kingdom (Matthew 22:1 ff., cf. Matthew 25.). The outstanding Kingdom requirement seems to have been repentance (Luke 13:1 ff.). In this passage Jesus in two ways illustrated this demand. We may assume that Jesus explained more fully what He meant when He said, "Except ye repent ye also shalllikewise perish." The Kingdom of God He taught His disciples "is within you" (Luke 17: 20 ff.). He must have taught them what He meant by that expression. The four mentioned references certainly indicate that Jesus taught His disciples what He meant when He asked them to follow Him in His Kingdom preaching.

Fourthly, what did Jesus teach the disciples to believe as to the attitude they were to assume toward themselves if they were to follow Him? He taught them to believe that they were of infinite worth to God. "Sons of the eternal Father" (Luke 15; 12:7, Matthew 6: 25 ff.). They are the salt of the earth, light of the world (Matthew 5:16.). They are to have toward themselves self-knowledge, self-reverence, self-control. In their attitude toward themselves, they are to assume the attitude of humility

instead of self-conceit (Luke 14:7-11. Cf. Luke 18:9-14.). That paradoxical statement, so often verified in ordinary life, that whosoever exalteth himself, shall be exalted, was to form a rule for His disciples, who should have regard to it in their aims and actions. "Christ is not giving counsels of worldly wisdom or of good manners, but teaching a lesson of humility. Everyone before God ought to feel that the lowest place is the proper place for him."[1] "Humility is the passport to promotion in the Kingdom of God."[2] Jesus was not laying down the rules of etiquette for banquets, nor was He dictating standards of conduct, but He did show how unseemly it is for an invited guest at a feast to take unasked the place of honor, and how humiliating to be afterwards assigned an inferior place by the host.

Fifthly, what attitude toward men did Jesus demand that His followers assume? He taught them that humanitarian values are above the legalistic requirements of a religious externalism (Mark 7:8 ff., Luke 6:9 ff.). They were to have a forgiving spirit toward their fellow-men (Mark 11:25; Matthew 18:21 ff.; Luke 17:31.). Their attitude is to be a matter of motive as well as of action, not only are murder, adultery and falsehood ruled out, but even anger, hatred, lust (Cf. Matthew 5:17-37.). They are to think of their fellow-men in terms of the best interest and the highest spiritual welfare of those men (Matthew

1. Plummer, "International Critical Commentary," p. 356.
2. " " " " p. 358.

5:38-42.). Not only toward their friends, but even toward their enemies they are to assume the spirit of love that they may conserve humanitarian values (Matthew 5:43-48; Luke 6:27 ff.). He taught them to avoid the spirit of self-righteous censoriousness (Matthew 7:1 ff.). Toward no man are they to assume the attitude of disrespect or irreverence (Matthew 18:10 ff.). Nor are they to be a spiritual hindrance to any man (Matthew 18:7 ff.). They are to love their neighbors as themselves (Luke 10:25 ff.). They are to seek toward their fellowmen the kind of attitude God the Father takes toward those men (Luke 6:35 ff.). Thus did Jesus demand of His disciples certain standards of conduct and points of view which they are to assume in their relationship to others as a partial requirement of following Him.

Sixthly, what attitude is the follower of Jesus to take to things according to His teachings? He taught that over against the spiritual, personal values, the material things are of secondary importance (Mark 10: 17-22.). He pointed out to His followers that the possession of things all too often prevented entrance into the Kingdom of God (Mark 10:23 ff., Matthew 19:23.). His followers must have an absolute loyalty to God the Father. They can not serve God and mammon (Matthew 6:26.).

They are to lay up for themselves treasures which are in heaven (Matthew 6:19 ff.). He does not disregard the fact that His followers must live (Matt. 6:32 b. cf. Luke 16:1 ff.). But His disciples are to seek first the Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be added (Matthew 6:33.). (1) For preceding reference (Cf. Luke 12:22 ff.). "Whosoever be of you that renounceth not all that He hath, He can not be my disciple" (Luke 14:23.). Jesus without qualification demanded of His followers their giving up every activity, and thing that did not help them in their quest for the highest values pertaining to the Kingdom of God, and if relatives, possessions, or power could only be retained in violation of the duties incumbent in the Kingdom of God, Jesus declares, without any condition annexed, the necessity of His disciples separating themselves. Jesus demanded that if men were to follow Him they not only were to be willing to give up their possessions, but there must be the spirit of complete renunciation. He commanded Zaccheus to give away half of his goods to the poor (Luke 19:1 ff.). We may likewise recall the rich, young ruler who went away sorrowful because of so many possessions. Jesus taught that loyalty to Himself must come before the exactions of possessions.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion we may conclude that Jesus taught His followers continuously,

not only the requirements that He placed upon them, but also instructed them as to matters of religious faith and belief. God is your father; you are His children and of infinite worth to Him; this is your Father's world; all things come from Him; you hold them in trust for Him; you are to respect yourselves as Sons of God; you are to hold the same attitude toward fellow members of the Kingdom; at all times and in all things seek to fulfill the will of the Father; I have shown you the Father, I revealed His character, I live His kind of life, loyalty to me will mean loyalty to Him; I came to save and seek that which was lost; go and do ye likewise - these are certainly teachings of Jesus which illustrate the demands which He placed upon His followers and the training which He gave them. Bundy is quite evidently mistaken, if the foregoing references mean anything, in His statement that Jesus made only one requirement of the disciples, that they follow Him. The experience of the disciples, in association with Jesus, led to a development in life character and religious beliefs. All this is certainly involved in the following of Jesus.

3. Jesus' demands of certain disciples or interested listeners.

Jesus, in the days of His flesh, made demands of certain disciples other than the twelve. To these interested listeners and inquirers He gave instructions which defined to a certain

extent the meaning of the following of Jesus.

In (Mark 10: 17-22 cf. Matt. 19:16 ff., Luke 18:18 ff.) Jesus teaches one who asked Him how he might inherit eternal life that he hust sell what he has, give proceeds to the poor and follow Him. Jesus could see that the young inquirer clung to his wealth so tenaciously that any just estimate of a higher good would be impossible; "that there was hidden in that love of riches, a luxurious self-love and a lack of sympathy with the want of men, that made it endanger the very roots of character. The counsel that he gives him, therefore is adapted to his individual case. There are evidently two grounds for it: one, the need of the man himself, and the other, the desire of Jesus to attach this choice spirit to himself, to have him in the inner circle of His disciples, attending immediately upon Himself. He needed to cut away all his attachments to the world, all his temptations to luxurious, self-indulgent living, for his own good, but especially in order to follow the hard and self-denying life of Jesus."[1] Jesus wanted to lead the rich young man to see that as yet he was not entirely good and that for goodness, he would have to maintain and carry on his endeavor amid new and greater tasks than those he had hitherto performed. In (Mark 12: 28-34 cf. Luke 10:25 ff.), He told one of the scribes that the greatest commandment of all is found

1. Gould, "International Critical Commentary," p. 192.

in a twofold requirement, "Love to God and love to man." We are not to believe that Jesus denied this sound teaching and requirement to His own select followers. In (Mark 14:3-9 cf. Luke 9:36 ff.), He portrays a certain consciousness of His own worth relative to the gospel of God. That same attitude, he no doubt taught His own disciples and demanded from them. In (Mark 2:18-22 cf. Mark 9:14-17, Matthew 9:14 ff.), in response to an inquiry, he describes His disciples (Luke 5:33 ff.), as sons of the bridegroom who are not to fast while he is present. The principle contained in this analogy is not that fasting is a matter of prescription, but of fitness. There are times for fasting and for feasting, yet if the times set for the ceremony meet with conditions out of place, then there should be an adjustment. Jesus tells the disciples that there will be time enough for them to fast after He leaves them. In (Matthew 8:18-20 cf. Luke 9:59-62.), He demanded of another disciple absolute allegiance to Himself as over against his family. (Luke 5:29-32.) pictures Jesus in the home of Levi at a feast, in answer to the criticism of the Pharisees, that He ate with Publicans and sinners. He replied "And Jesus answering, said unto them, 'They that are in health, have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.

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I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.'" This interpretation of His mission He taught His disciples. They were to believe in Him as a Saviour if they were to follow Him. In (Luke 10:1-16.), Jesus sends forth the seventy. He teaches them not only as to their hearers and the message they shall bring. Here we have a clear portrayal of the many fold meaning and significance involved in following Jesus.

He taught a Pharisee who had invited Him to dinner (Luke 11:37-41.), that the externalism of the law may be religiously insignificant. He taught another Pharisee (Luke 14: 1-6.), that humanitarian interests are of greater values than legalistic requirements. How often must Jesus have thought to inculcate in the minds of His followers this same point of view! The woes which He pronounced over the Pharisees and the lawyers (Luke 11:45 ff.), indicate the way in which Jesus must have taught His disciples to view the customs, institutions and habits of their day. To the one who asked Jesus that he bid his brother divide the inheritance (Luke 12: 13-21) He pointed out the peril involved in riches; but a man's life consisteth not in the things he possesseth, that the foolish one layeth up treasures for himself and is not rich toward God. Jesus no doubt taught His disciples according to this incident and parable again and again.

These various incidents in the life of Jesus but illustrate once again the fact that back of the following of Jesus lies a certain clear cut, definite, religious introduction; not only does the following of Jesus imply the fulfillment of certain ethical requirements, but it implies a philosophy of life, a religious education, a religious experience, and a religious life. The following of Jesus was therefore not a simple matter. Jesus did not merely say "Follow me." He taught His disciples all that was involved in that command. It was a complex and difficult task.

4. The response on the part of the followers.

The reaction on the part of a disciple very often indicates the ways in which the teacher sought to train the disciple relative to the problem of "following." The response on the part of the followers, whether in terms of active fulfillment or of wonderment or bewilderment or of opposition, portrays to a certain extent the various methods whereby the teacher sought to train His disciples. The content of His teaching, not only in respect to religious and moral requirements, but also relative to the transference of beliefs, ideas, ideals, attitudes, are clearly indicated in the response of the followers to their leader. Of course the literary fragments in the gospels

do not afford a detailed account of the reactions and the responses of Jesus' own disciples. A certain subjectivity is therefore necessary in an interpretation of the text, but the data at hand do give certain hints as to the many focused aspects of what Jesus meant by "Follow me," in the responses of His followers.

Simon and Andrew left their nets in order to follow Him (Mark 1:18; Matthew 4:20 cf. Luke 5:11.). James and John left their father, Zebedee, in order to go after Him (Mark 1:20; Matthew 4:22.). In the foregoing account Jesus taught that whosoever would follow Him must place loyalty to Him above family ties (Matthew 8:21 ff.), and material possessions (Luke 12:13 ff.). We may assume that these men who followed Jesus, though they must forsake trade and father in order to do it, had received a certain instruction and appeal at the hand of Jesus. He had already taught them no doubt the message of the Kingdom; He had inspired them with the desire to follow after Him in an attempt to make real the gospel in the lives of men. Levi, a Publican, left his tax collecting business in order to follow Jesus (Mark 2:13 ff., Matthew 9:9, Luke 5:27.). We may assume that Levi had also received instruction on the part of Jesus relative to the meaning of following Him. According to (Mark 10:28-31), we may believe that Jesus taught His disciples throughout their three years relationship relative to the necessity of placing Him first in their

allegiance. When Jesus and John sought selfishly and misunderstandingly the first places in the Kingdom for themselves (Mark 10:35 ff., Matthew 20:20 ff.), He responded with the demand that they be willing to suffer for His sake. And when the other disciples were "moved with indignation concerning James and John," He taught them that, "Whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister" (Mark 10:41 ff.). This incident is not the only time when the twelve misunderstood Jesus. He must have sought continuously to correct their ideas, to remould their ideals, to sublimate their desires according to His will. We find Him in (Matthew 7:18 ff.), using an everyday incident as an illustrative method of teaching His disciples the nature of membership in the Kingdom.

The attitude that Jesus' home town people took to Him (Mark 6:3 ff.), relative to which Jesus "marvelled because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:6), is instructive.

The situation indicates that Jesus required of His followers first of all belief in Himself. In order that they might have that belief He must have taught them many things about Himself in terms of His belief about Himself. "They went out and preached that men should repent" (Mark 6:12; Luke 9:6.). It is impossible to assume that the twelve preached merely on the basis of Jesus saying to them "Follow me." Back of their preaching is a

background of belief as well as of emotional consciousness relative to the meaning of repentance, in the light of Jesus. "And the disciples gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and they told Him all things whatsoever they had taught and He said unto them, 'Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile!" (Mark 6:30 ff.). These words paint a scene which must have been the experience of the disciples again and again. We may believe that resting awhile meant not only physical relaxation, but also a definite instruction whereby they might better understand and live the Kingdom message. His immediate followers walked not according to the tradition of the elders in the eating of their bread (Matthew 7:5; Matthew 15:2 ff.). We have seen in the foregoing sentences that Jesus taught the insignificance of petty requirements of the law as over against the commandment of God. He had convinced His disciples of this fact and they followed Him. He made sure that His disciples believed Him to be the Christ (Mark 7:28 ff., Matthew 16:13 ff., Luke 9:18 ff.). Back of Peter's answer, "Thou art the Christ" must lie a certain definite instruction on the part of Jesus. When His disciples were puzzled as to His reference to His possible passion (Mark 9:9 ff., Matthew 17:10 ff), and questioned Him on the basis of the teachings of the Scribes, He responded to their questions with an explanation. This incident is not to be conceived of as

being an isolated experience in Jesus' relationship to His followers.

On certain occasions the disciples failed to understand Jesus' parables (Matthew 13:10 ff., Luke 8:9 ff., Luke 12:41 ff.). Then He would explain to them the significance of that particular bit of teaching. Jesus must have welcomed these opportunities. He made use of a little everyday incident such as the disciples forgetting to bring bread (Matthew 16:5 ff.), in order to instruct His followers as to the nature of His teachings and His gospel. The mistaken opinion of a disciple formed for Jesus an opportunity for Him to correct the opinion of that disciple (Luke 9:49 ff.). He rebuked the mistaken attitudes of His disciples, the attitudes contrary to His spirit (Luke 9:51 ff.). On certain occasions a disciple might argue with Jesus relative to a teaching of Jesus or an event in Jesus' life which was contrary to the mind of the disciple (Matthew 16:22 ff.). Jesus used the occasion to correct the attitude of all His disciples toward Himself, and to deepen spiritually their following of Him. His disciples asked Him questions relative to their duties, attitude of mind (Matthew 18:21 ff., Cf. Matthew 26:22 ff.). He used the occasion to teach His Kingdom message. How often the situation must have come up. His disciples must have heard Him pray, not once, but many times; He taught them how to pray (Luke 11:1 ff.). Zaccheus' response to loyalty of Jesus' teaching elicits

from Jesus a word of commendation (Luke 19:1 ff.). Such an object lesson must have impressed upon the minds of the disciples quite emphatically certain principles demanded in the following of Jesus.

Jesus believed Himself to be the Messiah; the triumphal entry indicates that fact (Mark 11:1 ff., Luke 19:20 ff., Matthew 21:1 ff.). If Jesus permitted such a public demonstration of His belief, how much more emphatically must He have instructed His disciples alone as to His mission. At the last supper (Mark 14:27 ff.), we see Jesus' worry lest His disciples fail Him, even their protestations of loyalty do not seem sufficient. The incident no doubt portrays the trend of the conversation of Jesus with His disciples in the last days of His flesh.

In conclusion we may say that these references which portray the response and reaction of the disciples to Jesus and vice versa signify a close instruction, not only formal, but also "Projectional" and "Occasional" on the part of Jesus relative to His immediate followers. It was no easy task to lead His disciples on the path of following Him. They needed first of all to receive certain beliefs which would create in their minds an understanding of the meaning of the Kingdom message, character of God, and himself. Whenever they made mistakes or entertained mistaken opinions he found it necessary to correct their mistakes and opinions. He used various kinds of seemingly

insignificant incidents and occasions in order thereby that He might train the minds of His disciples. He required them to follow Him, but their responses and reactions to that requirement only indicate that Jesus knew quite naturally and normally that those men would never follow Him in spirit and truth unless He not only inspired them with His own spirit, but also gave to them a certain underlying, fundamental, religious philosophy of life. By "Follow me" Jesus certainly understood the necessity of a long period of instruction. The original step the disciples must take for themselves surely, and together with that step, is the development of their minds, characters, and religious experiences at the hands of Jesus, in terms of following Him in the Kingdom program and membership.

In general conclusion for Section II:

1. The outstanding religious experiences of Jesus which have come to us in the gospels and synoptics constitute a commentary as to the requirements and teachings which Jesus would place on those men who would follow Him.

2. The calling of the twelve presupposes a certain relationship between Jesus and the twelve.

3. Jesus' demands of the twelve and certain interested listeners points out not only the fact that He commanded His followers to follow Him, but also an indication that He gave to His disciples definite instruc-

tions as to the belief they are to assume relative to Himself, God, to the Kingdom, to one's self, to men, and to things.

4. The responses and reactions of the disciples to the life and teachings of Jesus indicate a continuous, structural relationship between Jesus and the disciples.

5. Consequently the expression "Following Jesus" can be understood only as it is thought of in terms of a two fold nature.

a. Requirements of Jesus.

b. Instructions of Jesus.

6. Jesus not only commanded His disciples "Do this" and "Go hither" and "Be Thou;" he likewise sought to build up in their minds certain definite beliefs which He considered essential to all who would be Kingdom builders.

7. Jesus did not assume that His followers knew the nature of membership in the Kingdom; He taught them how to follow Him.

8. The teaching is not to be isolated from the experience, or vice versa; but the one certainly can not be understood apart from the other.

III. THE EXPERIENCE OF FOLLOWING JESUS AS PORTRAYED IN THE BOOK OF ACTS. (Except Paul.)

1. Life in the Early Christian Community.

In (Acts 1:14.) we find the immediate followers of Jesus continuing steadfastly in prayer. "There is as yet no mention of taking or breaking of bread, but only of their unanimity. They were all together (verse 15). But strictly speaking, this description in vv 13-4 only applies to the eleven and the associated groups. Their life was one of abiding or expectant waiting; its characteristic was cleaving steadfastly to the Lord and one another in constant prayer. Such prayers included regular attendance at the temple worship, but no doubt the upper chamber was still a center for reunions among themselves. The dominant element of the prayer was praise."[1] (Luke 14:53.).

Jesus had taught His disciples to pray. They knew something about His prayer life. As they followed Him in this respect they were not blazing absolutely new trails for themselves. They had learned at the feet of Jesus that in prayer experience, one may come to know something as to the will of the Father (Acts 1:24 ff.). They began to regard Jesus in the light of their ancient

1. Rackham, "The Westminster Commentary." p. 10.

Scriptures. Jesus had told them that He, in a certain sense, fulfilled their Scriptures. It was natural for them as Jews and in relationship with Jesus to seek to prove by their Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah (Cf. Acts 1:15 with Acts 2.). We find the apostles assuming the preaching ministry as one of the natural methods of following Jesus, Acts 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,10,11. They preached belief in Christ as a condition of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 3:19; Acts 2:38.). In the light of Jesus' preaching as to Himself and His meaning for them the content of this preaching takes on a new sign though to be sure their own personal experience is not to be discarded. They ate bread together (Acts 2:42.). They had all things common (Acts 2:43.). Back of this practice in the life of the early Christian community, may be seen instruction relative to things; the requirements of Jesus, that loyalty to Him and God, that humanitarian interests should have first place. They preached in Jesus the ressurection from the dead (Acts 4:2.). This preaching has back of it their own experience of Jesus as the risen Lord. They preached on any and every occasion, Christ Jesus and Him crucified, as the one in whom there is salvation (Acts 4:8 ff.). Jesus taught them that no man knoweth the Father save Himself, that He "who willeth to do the will of the Father, should know the truth of the things whereof He

spake."

Once again in (Acts 4:34 ff., 4:36 ff., 5:1 ff.), we find these immediate followers of Jesus and their converts living a kind of communistic life. Their possessions they sold, their proceeds they placed in a common treasury to be used for the needs of the community. They were following Jesus as they had been taught by Him, in the rich, young ruler incident, the Zacceus incident, and in His other teachings relative to things.

When the religious authorities of Jerusalem forbade them to speak in the name of Jesus, Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:28,29.).

Back of this attitude of boldness on the part of these men, in part at least, may be seen the teachings of Jesus and the life of Jesus, in emphasis of the fact that loyalty to God and obedience to the will of God are to receive first consideration. "And every day in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus as the Christ" (Acts 5:42.). Jesus Himself had preached to them again and again His Messiahship; together with that fact is the fact of this personal experience of Jesus. The twelve believed that their particular work was defined by the demand of a spiritual ministry(Acts 6:1 ff.). That fact does not mean that they disregarded the economic necessities of life, but one may not be indulging himself

in the realm of romantic fantasy if he sees back of this attitude the first temptation experience of Jesus, as He must have inculcated its meaning by life and teaching into the mind and eventually into the life and character of His immediate followers. Stephen (Acts 7:60) toward his persecutors, assumes the spirit of forgiveness. It is no doubt true that in his religious experience he knew Jesus as a present Lord and Saviour, but the experience received a certain depth of meaning surely from the teachings of Jesus relative to forgiveness and the love of one's enemies, and the teachings He illustrated on the cross. If Stephen were not an eye witness, he surely learned these things at the feet of the apostles.

Once again the entangling hindrances which things may place in the way of one's Kingdom allegiance is illustrated in Peter's relationship with Simon, the Sorcerer (Acts 8:14 ff.). Entrance into the Kingdom can not be bought with silver. Peter had learned that fact at the feet of Jesus. When the Jerusalem persecution became an impossible hindrance they preached the gospel to many villages of Samaritans and elsewhere in Palestine (Acts 8:25,26.). One may see the disciples following their master once again in the expediency of a preaching program. In this wider extent of preaching the apostles emphasized their belief in Jesus (Acts 8:35; 9:42.).

Once more they followed Jesus; but His teaching as well as their religious experience lay back of that "following." It was not long before these early Christian followers faced the practical problem whether this new gospel was for the Jews or for non-Jews. In (Acts 10:1-48) Peter struggles with the problem of the centurion, Cornelius. Peter eventually preaches Jesus to Cornelius, and those who were present. As a result he was convinced that they too entered into the religious experience of Jesus. And He baptized them in the name of Jesus. In (Acts 11:1 ff.), those of the circumcision in Christ contend with Peter over his procedure while he was at Joppa at the house of Cornelius. But he responded with a narrative of the facts of experience. While it is true that Jesus for the most part restricted His ministry to members of His own group for reasons of practical expediency, it is however a fact that He taught the universal Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. When the early community of christians therefore began to preach to the Gentiles (Cf. Acts 11:19 ff.), the situation may have been created in an accidental manner. But the background for the eventual solution which they found for that problem is embodied in the life and teachings of Jesus (Cf. Acts 15.).

The life of the early Christian community therefore may be thought of as illustrating the fact as the members of that community who follow Jesus not only express their experience of Jesus, but also their beliefs, ideals, teachings which he had given His disciples.

2. The Experience of the Early Christian Believers.

In the aforegoing sentences I have made frequent use of the expression "The experience of the early Christian community." That experience quite naturally refers to the experience of Jesus in the days of His flesh. But it also has in mind those outstanding religious experiences of those early Christian believers which are described by the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them as related at Pentecost and on various other occasions. It will therefore be necessary to make a brief investigation as to the significance of this religious experience as far as the problem of this thesis is concerned.

Pentecost was one of the three great national festivals of Israel at which all the males of the people were required to present themselves every year before Jehovah, with an offering according to their means (Ex. 23:17; 34:23; Deut. 16:16-17; 2 Ch. 8:13.). At the time of Jesus, multitudes assembled for the Feast of the Passover, the Feast of Pentecost, and the Feast of

Tabernacles, not only from the Jewish homes in Jerusalem, but also from the Jewish communities scattered throughout the Roman Empire. Of these the attendance at the Passover was probably the largest, while the numbers at Pentecost would embrace Jews from foreign countries, the season being favorable for travel. All these feasts have a basis in the agricultural life of Canaan, a reference to the history of the nation, and a spiritual significance peculiar to each one.

The Passover Feast came first, signalizing the commencement of the barley-harvest and the dedication of the first sheaf by waving it before the Lord; commemorating the deliverance of the people from the bondage of Egypt; and pointing forward to the lamb without blemish. The feast of Tabernacles came last, celebrating with great rejoicings the completion of harvest and vintage, and commemorating, by the erection of booths in which the people dwelt for the week, celebrating the wanderings of their forefathers in the wilderness on the way to a settled life in Canaan.

Between these two national festivals came Pentecost. As Passover signalized the commencement of the barley-harvest, Pentecost marked its conclusion; and as Tabernacles

was a great national Thanksgiving for the completed vintage and fruit harvest for the year, Pentecost was a Thanksgiving for the completed grain harvest.[1]

The actual word Pentecost does not occur in the canonical books of the Old Testament, but is found in To. ii. I and II Maccabees xii, 32. Neither does it appear in the Gospels where the Feast itself is never mentioned. It occurs in the New Testament outside the Gospels three times, and in these passages it is employed not as a numerical adjective but as a substantive (Acts 2:1; 20:16; 1 Cor. 16:8.). The Feast is called Pentecost because it fell on the fiftieth day counted Nisan 16, the day after the Passover Sabbath, and fulfilled the ancient command: "Ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wine-offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete; even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days, and ye shall offer a new meal offering unto the Lord" (Lv. 23:15-16 cf. Deut. 16:9.). The names by which the feast is known in the Old Testament show its basis in the agricultural life of the people. It is the 'Feast of Weeks' called from the seven weeks reckoned from the morrow after Passover began 'to put the sickle to the corn' (Ex. 34:22; Deut. 16: 9,10;

2 Ch. 8:13.); the 'Feast of Harvest' (Ex. 23:16.), the 'Day of First Fruits,' a day of rest and holy convocation (Num 28:26 cf. Ex. 23:16; 34:22), although like the other Feasts it was of a week's duration. By later Judaism it was styled 'Azereth;' and 'Day of the Giving of the Law' in commemoration of the revelation of the Divine Will to the people at Sinai. Some hold that this latter interpretation was current as early as the time of Jesus.[1]

Although the festival was confined to one day, it continued in minor degrees for a whole week, and was celebrated with gladness and rejoicing. All this made it peculiarly popular; the season of the year, being favorable for travel, it seems from notes in Josephus and 'Acts of the Apostles' (Acts II), to have been frequented by a large concourse of pilgrims from all lands of the Jewish Dispersion.

According to Acts there were Jews and Jewish Proselytes from all over the Empire at Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost. There were "Parthians, Medes, Elamites, residents in Mesopotamia, in Judaea, Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Cyrene, visitors from Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretans and Arabians" (Acts II, 9-11.). In addition to those there were,

1. H. B. D. Vol. II Page 332.

of course, the twelve, including Mathias, and the one hundred twenty followers of Jesus together with other believers in Jerusalem. It is only natural that these should have been there. The great national feasts did not close to them because they were followers of Jesus. The disciples had never thought that in becoming the followers of Jesus they had severed their relations with the Jewish religion. They continued their attendance at the Synagogue and the Temple, and proceeded in general, usual conformity to the requirements of the Jewish Law. Jesus had, indeed, taught them the minor importance of all ceremonial observances, but he had not required them to discontinue the practice of the Jewish rites. He had given them principles - such as the fulfillment of the law in the gospel - which were destined to lead to the discontinuance of the Jewish Ceremonial, but none of these things had become apparent to them by the time of the Feast of Weeks.[1]

It has been an interesting problem to many critics as to just where Pentecost took place. At best it is a conjecture. One says, the Temple, another, an upper chamber where the Apostles had their headquarters. But no one knows where that was. And even so it is a question if it was a place or room where the twelve or the one

1. Stevens, New Testament Theology. p. 258-259.

hundred twenty could meet. It has been suggested that it was the room where the last supper was held, or that it is the room mentioned in (Acts 1:13.), or that it was the room where Matthias was chosen to till the vacancy left by Judas (Acts 1:25.). Now the references which we have in the New Testament to an 'upper room' are very few, and are included in the following: (Acts 1:13; Acts 12:12; Luke 22:12 which is the same as Mark 14:15.). From the evidence above, it is clear that the common assumption that the place of the Pentecost experiences needs not necessarily have been in the upper room. It is normal that they should have been at the Temple celebrating with the other people. Especially does this seem probable if the number of disciples was one hundred twenty. Bartlett says that those who were gathered together were those mentioned in (Acts 1:15.).[1] But there is no reason why this view should be taken. Surely Peter did not speak and preach in the upper room, and there is no mention of a transfer from the upper room to the Temple where one would expect the crowd to be and where Peter would in all probability make his speech. There are two other considerations that favor the Temple rather than an upper room as the scene of our narrative. The first is that when we read in (II:2.) the phrase, 'the whole house' it probably is an idiom meaning the Temple;[2] and the second,

1. Cambridge Bible P. 135.
2. Chase, "The Credibility of the Acts of the Apostles." p. 32.

that the Temple was the headquarters of the disciples after Pentecost.

As the disciples were gathered together at the Temple, early in the morning, as verse 16 shows, there suddenly came a sound as of a violent blast of wind which filled the whole temple where they were seated. They saw tongues like flames resting on the heads of each man, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Immediately they began to speak in tongues which attracted a great crowd. Some took the disciples to be drunken and others thought they heard them speak each in his own language. Thereupon, Peter addressed the crowd in a powerful sermon in which he protested the soberness of the eleven with him, the association of the phenomena with a prophesy of Joel, and the Messiahship of Jesus, whom the Jews had murdered even after He was accredited by God, and whom God raised from the dead. This fulfilled the prophesy of David. Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit on his followers. God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ, and the Jews should speedily repent of their national sin, be baptised and accept Jesus and then they too would receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-41.). There were a great many converted on that day (Acts 2:42.).

Why did Pentecost happen when it did? Why was the Holy Spirit poured out upon them at that time? What was the preparation of the disciples or the one hundred twenty

for this event? The men who were at Jerusalem at the great Feast were men who were conscious that they were attending a great religious festival. They were gathered as religious men. Everywhere about them was an atmosphere of religion. And in their constant devotions they had become tuned up for the event that was to take place. There is no reason to believe that the great experience which changed the course of their lives from that day on, would have happened without respect to circumstances. Though the men may not have known what was going to happen, they were spiritually set for it. In (Acts 1:3 f.) Jesus charged the disciples to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. They did not know how it was to manifest itself. And they were probably figuring on going back to their boats when the feast was over.

The disciples had never outgrown the old Jewish idea of the Messiahship of Jesus. All during the period of Jesus' life on earth, they were expecting a sudden revelation and consummation of the Messianic Kingdom. This persisted in their minds in spite of the constant teachings of Jesus to the contrary. At His death a cloud of gloom and spiritual despair must have clutched their hearts. All seemed irrevocably lost. But when the news of His resurrection was voiced abroad they took on new hope, yet only to be thrown into another fit of disappointment.

Then in (Acts 1:5.), Jesus speaks of a baptism of the Holy Spirit, they associate it with a return of Himself. The followers of Jesus were still far from the true insight of their Master's mission. They had not ceased to think that their Lord was Himself about to assume Messianic sway in a renovated Israel.[1] In (II:19.) the apocalyptic nature of this new era is reflected in Peter's speech. Bartlett says that it is one of the marks of Luke's candour that He records such a mistaken idea of the Apostles in their early days.[1]

And so the disciples just barely carried on. They had no progress. We have no detail of any activity of theirs before the Feast of Pentecost. All their splendid achievement is the result of work commenced after that day. For on that day they underwent a great Spiritual Revolution. It is in the adjustment of men to the Spirit, to God, and to Jesus, above all, that Pentecost has its real meaning. It is in this great change of mental and spiritual attitude rather than in the external signs of wind and fire or in strange powers of utterance that we recognize the supreme miracle of Pentecost.[2] And this was due to the coming of the Spirit.

The fundamental idea underlying the word 'spirit' is that of invisible force. Certain unseen forces of nature were by primitive man, personified and made spirits. The

1. Bartlett, "The Century Bible." - Acts - Page 125.
2. Swete, "The Holy Spirit in the New Testament" P. 76.

air, or the sky became peopled with invisible spirit forces, and these manifested, in the people they affected, characters of good or evil.[1] The Hebrews, alone of the races of which there is record, conceived of the 'Spirit of God.' They thought of their God, Jehovah, as having a 'Spirit,' and increasingly as time went on, they traced the effects of the divine will, especially the unusual, to the agency of this Spirit. This 'Spirit' however was never conceived as a separate entity from Jehovah, Himself. The 'Spirit' enhanced in men natural gifts and powers, such as wisdom and power of judgment, skill and craftmanship. But there was a gift especially, which it bestowed, inspiration. Thus man became an organ of Divine communication to other men. Possession of and by the spirit was sufficient authority for speaking the truth of God in the name of God (Is. lXl:l.).

The difference in conception which men today have of the 'Spirit' from that of the Old Testament traces back to the days of Jesus. To Him we owe the fact that we give an ethical meaning to these words. Rackham states that previous to Pentecost the Holy Spirit acted on men from without, like an external force, but now the Holy Spirit acts from within. Before, it had been transient, not it was abiding. One who had seen the influence of the spirit in the church for fifty years writes, "the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified." Thus did the

1. Streeter and Others - "The Spirit." Page 116.

writer express the immeasurable difference between its character as apprehended before and after Pentecost. After Pentecost, the effective presence of the Spirit within and among men had been so indubitable, so revolutionary, and so central to religious experience, that by comparison with what went before, it was as though the Spirit had not come into being.[1] In reality of course there had been no change in the Spirit, but in men, who had become fully receptive of the Spirit through the experiences that culminated in, and those that started from, the day of Pentecost.

The Holy Spirit is always to be conceived as a person, and as such He was regarded by the early Christians. They had as yet come to no realization of Him as a separate hypostasis. And the person with whom He was intimately associated was Jesus. Jesus had promised the disciples that He would send a comforter, and when under the influence of the Holy Spirit the men went out to preach, it was apparent that they were Jesus' men. This was only one determining factor to receive the Spirit and that was an attitude toward Jesus. When Philip goes into Samaria He preaches Jesus, and yet the Spirit has been poured out on him (Acts 5:8.). Peter and John also work in the name of Jesus when they go up to the temple (Acts 3:6.). Cornelius believed first, in Jesus and then received the Holy Spirit

1. Streeter, "The Spirit." page 120.

and baptism (Acts 10:4.). In these instances, and also in the case of Saul's conversion (Acts 9:5.), the prerequisite had in it no ritual or ceremony but an inner attitude toward God through Christ. There was no technical data demanded. That came later.

Thus Jesus becomes the hero of the Acts of the Apostles. Harnack says that this book was written around one idea, "The Power of the Spirit of Jesus In the Apostles Manifested In History."[1] This view, all the evidence that we can command, verifies. To say as Rackham does that "The Acts may be described as the gospel of the Holy Spirit" is adequate, for it implies a sharper differentiation from the person of Jesus, than is afforded by the facts.

The Holy Spirit gave to men a Divine enthusiasm working in them. There was no new constitutional endowment added. But henceforth they are men with a program. They had come into a new and higher realization of Jesus. They knew now that He was not lost to them. Henceforth He would abide with them always. He had come back, not in the catyclismic fashion that they had thought, but in a power that revolutionized their lives and was eventually to remake the world, and will ever persist in remaking it.

Before Pentecost the circle of Christians had experienced one event, that of choosing Matthias. They have as yet no inner communion with the unseen Lord. There is no trust in an

1. Harnack, "The Acts of The Apostles."

inspired rightfulness of judgment. The disciples look for the revelation of the Lord's will through the earthly and mechanical expedient of casting lots. The circle lived, it acted.[1] But the action was that of spiritual immaturity. But with the spiritual realization of Jesus' life for them, and His enduring presence, and the new world which opened before them, the actual living participation in the 'eternal Life' which John tells about, so thrilled them with joy that they babbled with tongues, so full they were. When these men had finally become prepared the ever-waiting spirit was manifested in them. The Coming of the Holy Spirit was an experience - experientially it must be understood.

Pentecost thus becomes one of the greatest days in the history of Christianity. On that day the great dynamic forces of inner spiritual life were loosened. Jesus is now thought of in terms of the "Spirit," and the Spirit is thought of in terms of Christ. Henceforth the Spirit is conceived as "personal." "He" operates along lines observable in the life of Jesus. In the receptive hearts of His followers He lives in truest fellowship, and manifests Himself in the work of apostles. Through prayer was precipitated the great truth that in Jesus there would be a constant guidance of God's will.

1. Chase, "The Creditability of the Acts of the Apostles." p.42.

IV. THE EXPERIENCE OF FOLLOWING JESUS AS PORTRAYED BY PAUL.

1. Paul's Experience as Related in Acts.

In view of the fact that so far as we know, Paul did not have contact with Jesus in the days of His flesh, though he may have been in Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion, the question at once arises, is it possible or permissible to find in Paul any indication as to what the expression "The Following of Jesus" meant for the first generation of believers. It is quite true that Paul did not receive at the hands of Jesus, any preparatory instruction, but there were certainly other ways whereby Paul could know just what the "following of Jesus" signified, in its moral and religious requirements and beliefs.

The conversion of Paul on the Damascus road (Acts 9:22-26.), has as a preparatory background not only Paul's dissatisfaction with the law, and at that time, the religious legalism, but it also presupposes that Paul had learned some of the things the Apostles were teaching and preaching relative to Jesus else he could not have gone from synagogue to synagogue refuting their teachings (Acts 9:1 ff.). Certainly after his conversion he would have certain opportunity to learn about Jesus

at the hands of the disciples and to restudy the Scriptures in the light of Jesus.

It is altogether possible for a man to be converted to the ideal of loyalty to God through faith in Jesus Christ without knowing very much about the teachings of Jesus. There is no doubt about the fact that that person can receive a real religious experience but just as soon as he seeks in every day life to follow Christ, in relation with his fellows and with God and in his religious thinking and rational formulations, just so soon will he find himself forced to go to the synoptics in order that he may learn the principles of Jesus, the mind of Christ. In the light of these teachings of those principles, he may work out his thinking and living in accordance with the requirements of Christ. We may assume that such was the case with Paul. We do find in the content of his preaching and in his eventful life, certain hints now and then, as to the fact that he too, even though in a different way, had sat at the feet of Jesus. It was not enough for him to learn on the Damascus road that he was to accept Jesus as his Lord, that he was to arise and go into Damascus in order to learn, so as to preach

the message of Christ. He needed also a certain backline information as to those ideals, requirements, attitudes and beliefs which are involved in the following of Jesus. He will give his own interpretation of Jesus in the light of the Damascus experience. He will add material of his own which portrays his religious training, and he will likewise follow Jesus, not in a haphazard, guess-work fashion, but rather in the light, first of all to be sure, of his very own real experience of Jesus, but also secondly, in the light of what he has learned at the hands of the early, Christian believers. Else how would Paul have known the incidents of the ressurection experience (1 Cor. 15) or the fact that Jesus had said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Immediately after Paul's conversion we read in (Acts 22.), that he, "confronted the Jews that dwelt in Damascus, proving that this is the Christ." On the basis of the reference we do not know the exact content of the proof that Paul advanced; but we may assume that he made use of the Scriptures in the light of His experience of Jesus, and likewise drew upon the things he had already learned at the hands of the disciples. Jesus had sent out the twelve to preach the Kingdom message, in which was a certain content of belief relative to himself. This preaching was involved in the "following of Jesus." Paul follows in the footsteps of tradition.

He preached boldly in the name of Jesus at Damascus (Luke 9:27.). At Antioch of Psidia, Paul preached in the synagogue on the Sabbath day (Acts 13:13 ff.). His sermon, as we find it, is a declaration of Jesus' fulfillment of the Jewish Scriptures. Paul preaches here a sermon similar to a sermon of Peter (Chap. 2 and 3.), and the sermon of Stephen (Chap. 7.). This fact suggests once again the mediating influence the disciples of Jesus had in training the mind of Paul relative to the gospel. In the same city Paul preached likewise to the Gentiles (Acts 13: 44 ff.). We may believe he included the Gentiles everywhere; in the light of this fact, together with the fact that the Gentiles elsewhere were receiving the gospel one must review the Jerusalem council (Acts 15, Gal. 2.). Paul tells us that in this council he insisted that all that was necessary for salvation is faith in God through Jesus Christ. Over against this insight of Paul into the spirit of the gospel of Jesus, may be seen Jesus' attitude toward the law. Paul, we may assume, had learned sufficient about Jesus to lead him to that insight, that insight which his conversion experience confirmed. Paul, in his missionary campaign, is a continual illustration of the demand of Jesus "Whosoever shall be first among you shall be your minister." He preached the gospel of God as seen in Christ Jesus. It

is hard to believe that Paul could have done this successfully, had he only had the command "Follow me." Many insights he received for himself through the intricacies of many a difficult situation through which he had to work his way; but we dare assume that he was able to follow Jesus in principle, in ideal, in conduct better and with a greater degree of certainty, because of a certain knowledge of the teaching of Jesus. In Achaia Paul preached that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 17:3.). In Athens he preached a sermon in which he incorporated the religious idealism of the Fatherhood of God, the universal friendship of man, together with the redemptive message of Jesus and His resurrection. In Corinth Paul likewise preached that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 18:5.). Once again we are reminded of the context of Jesus' teaching about Himself and His Kingdom message. In Ephesus, "he entered into the synagogue and spoke boldly three months reasoning and persuading as to the things concerning the Kingdom of God!" (Acts 19:8.). For the space of two years (Acts 19:10 ff.), Paul preached "the word of the Lord" both to Jew and Greek so that "the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified." "So mightily grew the work of the Lord and prevailed." Paul certainly knew something about the context of the word of the Lord and the Kingdom as Jesus preached and lived it. The collection which Paul

made for the poor in Jerusalem is indicative of the fact that he understood Jesus' teaching as to things. Paul describes his ministry in Asia Minor, in Macedonia and Achaia as follows "testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21); "But I hold not my life to any account as dear unto myself so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24.)." In (Acts 20-25.) he describes his ministry as preaching the Kingdom. I can not help feel that Paul followed Jesus in his life and ministry, but that following involved more than the Damascus experience, no matter how important the Damascus experience was to Paul. Once again before Felix, Festus and King Agrippa, we find Paul preaching faith in Christ Jesus (Acts 24,25,26.). In Rome, (Acts 28.) he preached the Kingdom of God and taught the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 28:30.). This is one more illustration of the fact that Paul in his following of Jesus taught things about Christ, some of which must have been teachings of Jesus and incidents in the life of Jesus. The Epistles of Paul in certain respects tend to substantiate this point of view. Paul is forced to enter into administrative disciplinary and instructional measures for the sake of members of those

churches. His actions and teachings, though colored by his own experience of Jesus and by the religious background of his instruction, and it may be at times, the Hellenistic culture in which he lived, must certainly have embodied a knowledge as to the life and teachings of Jesus which would determine his following of Jesus as the case of the other early disciples. The independence of his own apostolic authority as over against the "eleven" which Paul advances in reply to the charges of certain of his opponents, would not gainsay the foregoing fact. He writes to the Thessalonians that they are to be sanctified unto God, to maintain the attitude of mutual love to each other, and of faith in Christ. The sundry exhortations that he writes them together with these other teachings, breathe the spirit of Jesus. Thus he seems to have followed Jesus in terms of Jesus' own teachings and requirements. Over against dissensions and cliques that existed in the Corinthian church (Cor. 1-3.), he teaches the Corinthian Christians that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God; that all are workers together through Christ for God; that they were Christ's and Christ's is God's. Back of this administrative instruction may be seen Jesus' teachings relative to himself, though of course Paul had realized the claim of Christ for loyalty in his conversion experience. He demands in the name of the

Lord Jesus' purity as over against the fornication that existed in the Corinthian church. One is reminded of Jesus' teaching, "That whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matthew 5:28.)." He instructs them as to litigation proceedings which apparently existed among them. Back of instruction seems to lie the teachings of Jesus as to forgiveness. He teaches that the Corinthian Christians are not to use their new liberty in a way that will harm their brothers (1 Cor. 8,9,10.). They are to remember that Christ died for their sakes and seek to conserve the best interests for each other. This is certainly a following of Jesus according to Jesus' own words. Paul's teaching as to the use of personal talents, his great discussion of the more excellent way especially the way of love becomes more meaningful as seen in the light of Paul's Jesus experience but also of knowledge of him. In (2 Cor. 10 ff.) Paul gives his apologia-pro-vita-sua; he describes the suffering, the efforts under which he has gone in order to preach the gospel of God. All things he has done for Christ's sake. He had followed Jesus even as Jesus required.

In the Epistle to the Romans Paul states his faith in a somewhat formal manner, but in that statement there is the belief that all men need salvation, that God has

provided a way of salvation for men by faith through Jesus Christ. He writes "If Christ is in you, ye shall have life." (Romans 8.). Nothing can separate them from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. It is therefore his prayer that his readers will present themselves as a living, holy sacrifice unto God (Rom. 12.). We have here certainly a Pauline gospel. Paul preaches the love of God, the gospel, the love of Christ in terms of his own thinking and experience, but Paul likewise, we may assume, had back of his creative work a certain knowledge of the Christian tradition. In (Romans 9:13,14) we find exhortations which breathe forth the sermon on the mount.

Though the epistles to the Phillipians, Ephesians and Colossians deal with different situations, they do embody the insinuative impression in Paul's emphasis of the grace of God, the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. In Paul's insistance on the Christ-like life, Paul was writing on a certain knowledge on the life and teachings of Jesus. The foregoing statements would not be refuted by the fact that the oral tradition or the written fragments until after Paul had written the greater number of his Epistles.

Paul in his epistles to Philemon teaches Christ's message of Christian brotherhood. The pastoral epistles in spite of their practical nature add a certain slight but further confirmation of the foregoing point of view.

In conclusion:

1. The accounts in Acts relative to the life and teachings of Paul, picture Paul as an early disciple, preaching the saving love of God for all mankind as seen in Jesus Christ; the necessity for the suffering of Jesus; the resurrection of Jesus and the spiritual requirements for membership in the kingdom as over against the external legalism of Judaism. Back of this Pauline preaching and life is to be posited Paul's religious experience.

2. Paul's religious experience involved not only his conversion experience but also the sum total of the religious instruction of his life.

3. Paul's religious information included, we must assume, a certain knowledge of the early Christian tradition.

4. The Pauline epistles constitute so many proofs of the foregoing conclusion.

5. Paul followed Jesus. He described that "following" as the "mind of Christ," as ἐνήκοοτω ; he thought creatively as to the meaning of the gospel of Christ for human experience and in its application in the lives of men; he developed in a certain sense a Pauline Christian theology, though not in a formal sense; but one must assume that in the background of Paul's following Jesus was a certain familiarity with the Christian traditions in whatever form it existed

in the early Christian community.

V. CONCLUSION.

1. The following of Jesus as a description of the early disciples is complex rather than simple. The expression involves not only the challenging requirements of Jesus, but also the beliefs, ideals, involved in his teachings.
2. The outstanding experience of Jesus as reported in his baptism, temptations, passion, constitutes a point of departure; on the basis of Jesus' experience, we may infer the requirements and teaching which he made of his disciples.
3. The disciples found it necessary to work out with Jesus in respect to the problems they faced the meaning of "Follow me."
4. The synoptic tradition indicates that Jesus taught his disciples relative to himself, God, to the Kingdom, to themselves, to their fellowmen and to things.
5. The responses and reactions of the disciples indicate their willingness to follow Him but their misconceptions, mistaken ideas, as to all that is involved in that expression.

6. In the book of Acts we find these disciples still at work at the problem of following Christ. The dominating influence of his presence and teaching is evident.

7. At Pentecost the disciples received a great spiritual blessing by the coming of the holy spirit as an experience. They thought of Jesus in terms of the "spirit," and of the spirit thought in terms of Christ. In the receptive hearts of his followers He lives in truest fellowship and manifests Himself in their work.

8. The experience of Paul as an apostle of Jesus involves not only his conversion, but also his Jewish, religious instruction, and a knowledge of the Jewish tradition.

9. The book of Acts and the letters of Paul, picture Paul, his character, work and message; interpret the gospel of Christ in a new way, but back of his experience, message, work and writings, lies the dominating ideal "Follow me." And it is hardly conceivable that Paul, in spite of his contact with Jesus' immediate followers, followed Jesus at all times and in all respects without a knowledge of the Jesus tradition.

10. The following of Jesus is therefore a religious experience, but it meant for the early disciples a long process of development and experimentation which continued throughout

their life. They were obliged to work out the understanding of Jesus and the application of his spirit and principles to definite situations. They needed his religious beliefs as well as the contact of his presence. All of this is involved in the "following of Jesus."

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